

NEW YEAR'S MORNING,

IN EDINBURGH;

AND

AULD HANDSEL MONDAY,

IN THE COUNTRY:

TWO POEMS IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT,

BY THE AUTHOR OF

THE SHEPHERD'S WEDDING.

Happy the youth on whom Dame Fortune smiles,
And gives him wealth his wishes to pursue.

TURNBULL.

EDINBURGH:

—1792.—

NEW YORK MORNING

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author takes this opportunity of informing the good-natured reader, (for good-natured he must be, who peruses the following trifles), That five verses of the first poem were inserted in the third number of the BEE. Those verses are here re-printed: but the reader will easily know them, as they are distinguished with inverted commas. To the ingenious Editor of the Bee, the author must own he is indebted for most of the explanatory notes which are affixed to the poem. For his trouble the author returns him his most sincere thanks.

AULD HANDSEL MONDAY in the Country, which immediately follows The NEW YEAR's MORNING in Edinburgh, is an original, if he may be allowed so to call it. Though it may afford little or no amusement to readers in general, the author hopes, that it will some day be in his power to entertain them better. Some may call this vanity, but where is the man who has not his own share of it:

" No man there is without envy,

" No Poet without vanity."

... that is, too distant

... the means of making me

of Poetry

Any notions I have of this art

... merely by Nature, aided only

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PREFACE.

SOME circumstances, too trifling to mention, were the means of making me turn my attention to Poetry.

Any notions I have of this art are suggested merely by Nature, aided only by a few occasional hints which I have at different times heard in conversation.

For some time bypast I have dedicated my leisure hours to Apollo, in composing a few trifles. From the Collection, (if it may be called one,) I have selected the two following. I now offer them to the public, hoping they will pardon my presumption, and encourage a sincere lover of Verse, however faulty his SECOND production may be.

The style is a native of the country in which I live. Most nations have had their Homers and their Virgils, who have courted the Muses with the greatest assiduity; and Scotland has been inferior to none of her neighbours, in the number of her Sons who have deserved these titles. I am proud, there-

fore, to call her dialect my mother-tongue : there appears in it an ease and simplicity, of which few nations can boast.

Conscious of my inability to climb Parnassus, I have only thrown myself down at the foot of the mount. In this humble posture, I wait for that compassion from the CALEDONIAN MUSE, who is the glory of the country in which she dwells.

I even flatter myself, that she has not left me wholly unregarded; and that, though my performances are by no means to her honour, She will not think me unworthy of some share of her favours.

I return my sincerest thanks to all my subscribers, for this and past favours :

While I am,

With the greatest respect,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Most Obedient

Humble Servant,

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THE AUTHOR.

NEW YEAR'S MORNING.

IN EDINBURGH.

An' what suppose we're air afeer,

I see nae evil in it;

Sae here's that we may end the year

Nae war than we begin in.

Asok.

"THE bard, (1) wha sang o' Hallow-fair,

" The Daft Days, and Leith Races,

" Wha's canty sangs dis kill our care,

" In mony funny places;

" Forgat to sing that mornin' air,

" -Whan lasses shaw their faces,

" Wi' gude het pints, (2) maist ilka where,

(1) Ferguson.

(2) *Het pints*.—Among the lower classes of the people, in Scotland, it is customary for some person in each

“ Ye’ll kep them gau’n in braces,
Fu’ soon that morn.

“ Hail, Hogmenae ! (3), hail, funny night !

“ For daffin’ an’ for drinkin’,

“ For makin’ a’ thing right and tight,

“ For killin’ care an’ thinkin’ ;

“ For rinnin’ thro’ the streets like drift,

“ For kiffin’ an’ for clappin’,

“ For clearin’ up the mind an’ fight

“ Wi’ a weell-made het chapin’,

Fu’ strang that morn.

Now Mary a’ thing right maun pit,

Syne wash her little handy,

each family to rise very early in new year’s morning, and prepare a kind of caudle, consisting of ale mixed with eggs, beat up with sugar and a little spirits, prepared hot, which is carried through every apartment in a stoup (pot) containing a Scots pint, (two English quarts); and a cup of this is offered to each person when in bed. This beverage is technically called *het* (i. e. hot) *pints*.

(3) *Hogmenae*—The last night of the year. A great deal of gossiping and fun goes on that evening. It was formerly the custom in the country for small parties of young people to go about from house to house disguised, and act a kind of play. These were called *guisards*. That custom is now wearing out.

Wha, think ye, wad be her first fit (4),
 Bat her ain true love Sandy ;
 Wha brings short-bread (5) as sweet's a nit,
 An' eke three gills o' brandy,
 Makes a het pint, syne down he'll fit,
 An' ablins sing the Dandy (6)
 To her that morn.

" By twal o' clock we tak' the street,
 " There reel about like mad,
 " While aft we get frae some we meet
 " O' gude short-bread a dad ;
 " Then lassies' lips, like cherries sweet (7),
 " We maun that mornin' prie,
 " Though for't we get a braw red cheek,

(4) *First fit*.—The first person we meet on new year's morning is called our *first fit* (first foot).

(4) *Short-bread*.—A kind of cake made of flour, with butter and sugar, and baked hard. That and other kinds of sweet cakes are then distributed liberally to all guests in every family.

(6) *The Dandy*.—A favourite song, sung by Mr Moss in the character of Caleb in Mr Pillan's comedy called, *He would be a Soldier*.

(7) It was the universal custom in Scotland, till of late, for every male to salute, by kissing, every female of his acquaintance, the first time he met her in the new year.

" Unless we be fu' flee

" To jink that morn."

What signifies the warld's gear,

Thae wad be filly asses,

Wha wad compar't to the new-year,

Whan wa'kin' wi' their lasses ;

Hear, hear, ye bardies, while I swear

By that high mount Parnassus,

Nought can excel the joys whan here

We mark the fun that passes

Upo' that morn.

On Hogmenae I sat up late,

Myself nae doubt adornin',

As I intended to see Kate

Fu' early on that mornin' ;

But lang ere I wan o'er the gate,

I met a lassie gauntin',

I squeez'd her hand, she lookit blate ;

Well kend I she was wantin'

A kifs that mornin'.

I mak' nae doubt, but ane an' a'
 Ha'e heard the proclamation (8),
 Whilk ay is cry'd, to keep in awe
 The rising generation.
 But troth there is nae ane ava,
 Or low or high in station,
 But likes, nae doubt to tak' their blaw,
 Altho' in moderation,
 By times that morn.

The plainstanes now, frae en' to en',
 Are black wi' lads an' lasses,
 And some strang-bearded married men
 To mark an' see what passes;
 Thae ablins in the croud preten'
 To be but beardless youthies,
 An' stowlens they will mak' a fen'
 To prie the lasses' mouthies
 Sae sweet that morn.

(8) *Proclamation.*—It is customary, every year, for one of the town-officers, attended by the city-guard drummer, to publish through the public streets of Edinburgh, a proclamation, at the desire of the Lord Provost and Magistrates, to give notice, that all who are found quarrelling, and knocking down harmless and sober people in the streets, will be severely punished, &c.

" Hech, wae's my heart, a barber lad
 " Did measure the street fairly,
 " An' roar'd an' rar'd like ane stark mad,
 " He had fa'n till't o'er early;
 " A cellar, upo' the high street,
 " But ony ravel, bare,
 " Gart the puir scraper tyne his feet,
 " An' tumble down the stair,
 " The creels that morn.

O Tonal, Tonal, hurry out,
 Cry'd black Baldy Macauly,
 For yonder be some blackguards clout
 Ane o' our men, puir fallow;
 The guard on them came fly about,
 Tho' some did get aff brawly,
 They ae puir fuddl'd chiel did hook,
 An' gied him a rough haully
 To th' guard that morn.

" Some Highland blue (9) is unco gued,
 " As lang's we keep frae anger,
 " It pits fowk in a merry mood,
 " An' keeps them out o' langer;

(9) *Highland blue*.—Highland whisky.

" But troth I'm fley'd that yon daft coof,
 " Wi's twa een in the glammer,
 " Wha dang aff Tonal's nose the scroof,
 " Maun thole the Bailie's yammer
 " For it next morn.

The clock had newly chapped ane,
 Whan to the street I rambl'd,
 An' up a lang dark stair alane,
 Wi' meikle faught, I scrambl'd;
 There I met wi' some hearty fowks,
 An' tho' I'm but a striplin',
 I e'en fat down to hear their jokes,
 An' soon we fell a-tipplin',
 Fu' air that morn.

A gaucy bowl they did bring in,
 Wi' sucker, rum, an' water,
 They fill'd it up near han' the brim,
 Syne a' began to clatter;
 For ilka ane did gi'e their toast,
 An' glasses roun' gaed clinkin',
 Till in a blink a' care was lost,
 Wi' daffin' an' wi' drinkin'
 Sae fast that morn.

Awee bit gabby callan than,
 I canna troth here misfs him,
 Drank, May King GEORGE live weel an' lang,
 An' O may heaven blefs him !
 Haud, haud, quo' Davy, ye are wrang,
 Nae war I'm fure I wifs him,
 Were ye like me, lad, by my sang,
 Ye'd frae your thoughts dismisfs him,
 For anes this morn.

Here Davy he began to drink
 To th' memory of Charlie,
 While Duncan he begins to think,
 That it was nae done fairly ;
 He fill'd his glafs up to the brink,
 Till now he drank but sparely,
 Syne kifs'd its bottom in a blink,
 That was, quo' he, done rarely,
 I'm fure, this morn.

But Duncan, wae's my heart for him,
 Nae witch atweel at drinkin',
 Drank aff the flowin' bowl the skim,
 Sae it fet him a-winkin' ;

Come fill my glaſs up to the brim,
 He cry'd, as he was ſinkin',
 'Twas done to pleaſe the devil's lim',
 But ſoon it ſent him linkin',
 To ſleep that morn.

Ae laſs there was wi' ſweet ſweet breath,
 An unco bonny finger,
 An' that ſhe was I'll gi'e my aith,
 Ye'll nae fin' ſax to ding her;
 She ſang ſae ſweet Auld Robin Gray,
 Next how Will courted Nancy,
 An' ſyne the Birks o' Invermay,
 Theſe three pleas'd ilk ane's fancy
 'T was there that morn!

Now ilka chiel an' laſſy there,
 Wi' drinkin' gude rum-tody,
 Were a' for ploys an' ſportin' rare,
 For they did fear nae body;
 We parted a' gude frien's atweel,
 The ſax hour bell was jowin',
 When ilka laſs wi' her ain chiel
 Aff to their hames gaed rowin',
 Weel-fair'd that morn.

Auld Reikie's fam'd for a' that's rare,
 Porter an' oyfters plenty,
 For ilka thing in season air,
 Braw lads an' lasses dainty.
 An' what suppose we're air asteer,
 I see nae evil in it;
 Sae here's that we may end the year,
 Nae war than we begin it,
 Fu' air that morn.

AULD HANDSEL MONDAY (1),

IN THE COUNTRY.

Wi meikle faught they a' gat hame,
Wi' sma' or little skaith,
'Tho' fu'—next year they'll be the same,
Gin they be spar'd by Death.

ANON.

Now Phoebus frae his fil'er car
Wi' dim grimace dis peep,
While the red moon, an' mornin' star,
Far out o' sight dis creep.

(1) *Auld Handsel Monday*.—A day set apart, by the common people in this country, for feasting and drinking. Among the multitude, there are a good many honest-hearted wealthy farmers, who think themselves no way degraded by celebrating the day with a jovial company, a good dinner, and a sparkling bowl of rum-punch.

The cock upo' the bauk dis craw,
 To raise them frae their sleep,
 And bids ilk ane come fast awa'
 Their wames fu' air to steep
 Wi' drink that day.

Bell to her Mam' crys, haste ye, bring
 My braw new droggit gown,
 My ribbands, an' the lang stay-string
 I coft last owk in town.
 My maunky coat an' faxpence ring.
 I gat frae Geordy Bell,
 I wat she thought that nane wad ding,
 Nor be fae braw's hersell
 Upo' that day.

Now Jamie Black draws on wi' care,
 His stockin's an' new shoon,
 The buckles he coft at the fair,
 Shone like the starns aboon;
 His napkin tied about wi' care,
 His coat made free o' flour,
 For want o' better, Jamie's hair
 Was powder'd weel wi' flour,
 Fu' white that day.

Auld Willie at the keekin'-glafs
 Is takin' aff his phizz (2)
 While, to make speed, his help-mate Bess
 Draws the kame thro' his gizz (3);
 Her block was the han' o' a tub,
 She gied it a rough frizz,
 Syne wi' a candle gi'es't a rub,
 Without mair fash, it dis
 To fair that day.

By aught o'clock the roads are thrang,
 Wi' lasses an' wi' lads,
 An' farmers' wives, o'er braw to gang,
 Gae ridin' by on pads;
 Ilk ane has got a dainty whang
 O' gude white-bread an' cheese,
 The best o' gear the wame to pang,
 For it a relish gi'es
 To drink that day.]

The lasses aft their coaties draw
 Up maist aboon their knee,
 That their new stockings, white as snaw,
 The lads ahint mae see;

(2) *His phizz*.—His beard.

(3) *His gizz*.—His wig.

Wow, wow, but they were clean an' braw,
 An' comely to the e'e,
 Sae there was walth o' funny jaw,
 Great daffin' an' great glee
 'Mang them that day.

Now Charlie man pit a' thing right,
 As he expected nine
 Blithe canty fowk to spend the night,
 An' eke with him to dine;
 The young gudewife was cleanly dight,
 An' as friends ne'er had met,
 They swore, gin they kept health and fight,
 The house should be weel het
 For ance that day.

Or lang the house wi' his friends fills,
 The cheese is then set down,
 It tak's near fax Newhaven gills (2)
 To weet their throats aroun';
 The cap now gaes fu' brisk I ween,
 Fu' o' stout nappy brown,
 That Charlie had brought up yestreen,
 Frae the big borough town.
 To drink that day.

(2) *Newhaven gills*.—Half a mutchkin, (two gills).

Some o' the lasses were fae mim,
 Ae cap wad fair'd them thrice,
 They downa lat o'er meikle in,
 For that they were ca'd nice;
 Will White cry'd for a gill o' gin,
 To fair nae en' I true,
 But just to mak' his Christy blin',
 Or ablins blinkin' fu'
 For sport that day.

They ply'd the cap fu' brisk about,
 Forgettin' it was strang,
 Some were fae fu' they downa lout,
 Tho' they had hame to gang;
 At ilka toast they drank cap out,
 An' whiles some fang a fang,
 Till ilk chiel's wame was like a hoop,
 As fu' as it cou'd pang
 Wi' drink that day.

'Gain Phoebus did his window steek,
 An' bade adieu to day,
 The sil'er moon began to keek
 Out o'er the gow'ny brae:

Then some began to turn fu' sick,
 Others cried, come away,
 While some began to nod an' sleep,
 An' cou'd na langer stay
 Frae hame that night.

The wind had risen gay an' high,
 'Twas wearin' late that night,
 The starnies sparkled i' the sky,
 The moon was shinin' bright ;
 Whan Willie toddled slaw out by,
 Sae fu' he' tint his fight
 But lang ere he pass'd the swine's sty,
 His gizz flew out o' fight,
 I' th' air that night.

Wi' that he gied an unco roar,
 That set them a' asteer,
 Some broke their shins gae'n to the door,
 Some p—t their breeks wi' fear ;
 Whan wives saw Willie's big bald pat,
 They cry'd, The L—d be here,
 An' keep auld Cloutie frae this spat,
 An' a' sic fowk as we're,
 Fear'd, fear'd that night.

But birkies wha had drank a skair
 O' gude stout nappy ale,
 A' that they saw ne'er steer'd a hair,
 Nor did their courage fail;
 But wae's my heart, the lasses fair,
 An' honest Willie's wife,
 Were frighted wi' the fight fae fair,
 They near han' lost their life
 Wi' it that night.

At length a lass fand Willie's gizz,
 An' clapt it on his crown,
 An' tho' it had lost a' the frizz,
 Fu' happy was the loun;
 Wi' meikle faught they a' gat hame,
 Wi' sma or little skaith,
 Tho fu',—neist year they'll be the same,
 Gin they be spar'd by death.
 To see that day.

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